

News Release

KENTUCKY HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM RECEIVES GRANT Helps high-risk pool offset losses in covering 3,300 Kentuckians

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 3, 2005) – Kentucky Access, the state's high-risk pool for health insurance, has received a federal grant for about \$267,000 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is in addition to a \$2.3 million grant from the federal agency to the Kentucky program in 2004.

The grants, part of \$40 million awarded nationwide, will be used to offset losses incurred in fiscal years 2003 and 2004 by the high-risk pool, which offers health insurance to about 3,300 individuals with serious medical conditions.

"Kentucky Access has been vital in providing a necessary safety net for those who could not obtain health insurance in the regular market," said Glenn Jennings, executive director of the Kentucky Office of Insurance, the state agency overseeing the high-risk pool. "In addition, the high-risk pool has helped stabilize Kentucky's health insurance market overall, keeping rates more affordable for all of us and encouraging more insurers to offer products in the individual market."

To be eligible for grant money, states must have a "qualified" high-risk pool that meets certain criteria, including capping premiums. Funds were distributed based on the number of uninsured individuals in the state.

Kentucky Access is a division of the Office of Insurance, which is an agency of the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet.